



**July
2005**

Reserve Pinot Noir Club™
Dusky Goose 03, Cherry Hill Estate 03
Avalon Favorites Month

Dusky Goose Pinot noir is the wine Avalon staff reach for more than almost any other. Maybe it's our admiration of Lynn Penner Ash's winemaking skills, maybe it's just the multi-layered, complex, sophisticated nature of the wine. **Cherry Hill** is a winery, new to Oregon, whose wines stand out from the flurry of new releases this year. The winery makes its wines from its Estate vineyard, and they show a lot of promise.



Cherry Hill Winery

Cherry Hill Winery and Vineyard is a newly-constructed 12,000 square foot winery in Oregon's Willamette Valley. The winery produces about 5,000 cases of estate-grown Pinot Noir each year from the 55-acre Cherry Hill Estate vineyard, planted in 1998 and 1999 to Pinot noir.

The area, just east of **Van Duzer Winery** and northwest from Salem, has long been known as "Cherry Hill", and through the 1960's, cherries were grown commercially across the entire rolling valley. Before cherries were even cultivated, wild cherries grew in the area.

Around 1990 the vineyard property was purchased by a well known California winemaker, William Hill, one of the Napa valley winemakers who pioneered that region's vineyards. Hill's special facility with hillside sites is famous: he developed Atlas Peak, Diamond Mountain Ranch, Mount Veeder and other distinctive appellations in the Napa region.

That same 'nose for slopes' led him to the Eola Hills area. The undeveloped rural district around Cherry Hill had all the right ingredients for world-class pinot noir: the right cool climate, southwestern slopes, elevations between 250-500 feet, and the essential rich, well-drained Jory soils. (In fact, Jory soil is named for nearby Jory Hill in Oregon's Marion County.)



William Hill acquired a large tract of land in the Eola Hills early in the 1990s. He divided the property into three separate parcels, all of which are now planted to pinot noir and one of which was purchased in 1998 by Cherry Hill owner Mike Sweeney. William Hill continues to pursue vineyard development in the area with his Premier Pacific project.

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NW Big Reds Club™
Woodward Canyon Estate Red 02
Three Rivers Cabernet Sauvignon Champoux 02

Big Reds Club this month offers two wines from the Walla Walla Appellation, and the wineries are located right down the road from each other. The **Woodward Canyon Estate Red** is our annual offering of the Woodward wine we find best from the vintage (last year we sent you the previous vintage of this wine). The **Three Rivers Champoux Cabernet Sauvignon 02** is a delightful discovery. Winemaker **Holly Turner** continues to produce popular, quaffable, well received wines, but this single vineyard Cab takes her winemaking to a new level, in our opinion. Unusually 100% Cabernet, it's a different take on the fruit of the highly rated Champoux Vineyard.



Holly Turner

Champoux Vineyard

One of the top vineyards in Washington, wines made from Champoux Vineyard include Quilceda Creek, Andrew Will, and the Sineann Block One Cabernet Sauvignon. Very difficult to procure, wines made from this vineyard are some of the most sought after from Washington.

Andy Perdue, editor of **Wine Press NW**, says: "Champoux Vineyards, high in Washington's Horse Heaven Hills, is considered one of the finest Cab vineyards in Washington. Its greatness is evident in this (the Three Rivers 02) wine, which reveals classic aromas of dark berries, chocolate, pencil shavings and black olives and flavors of tobacco, blackberries and black tea. "

Champoux Vineyards was formed in 1996 by Paul and Judy Champoux, and a consortium of the wineries that were customers for many years. The vineyard was the old Mercer Ranch Vineyard, planted by Don Mercer in the late 70's and early 80's. Paul has managed the vineyard since 1989 and has improved the quality of this 170 acre vineyard with his canopy management and nutritional balance.

Reserve Pinot Noir Club™

Dusky Goose 03 \$48
 Cherry Hill "Estate" 03 \$28

Northwest Big Reds Club™

Woodward Canyon Estate Red 02 \$52.50
 Three Rivers Cabernet Champoux \$39

New Discoveries Club™

Alpine Vineyards Chardonnay 04 \$12
 St Innocent Temperance Hill PN 03 \$23

Dessert Wine Club™ "Best Sellers" Month

Kiona Chenin Blanc Ice Wine 04 \$21
 Andrew Rich Gewurztraminer Ice Wine 04 \$20

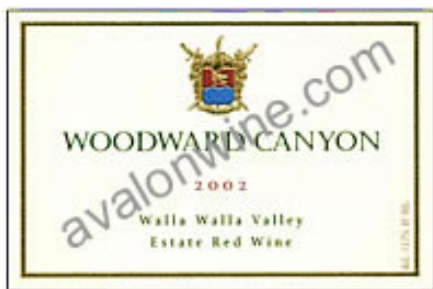
Big Reds Club continued from page 1

The vineyard is made up of 84 acres of Cabernet Sauvignon, 16 acres of Chardonnay, 13 acres of Lemberger, 30 acres of Riesling, 7 acres of Muscat, 8 acres of Cabernet Franc, 2 acres Syrah, and 10 acres Merlot. The member wineries in the company are Andrew Will, Badger Mountain/Powers, Quilceda Creek, and Woodward Canyon.

Champoux Vineyard is located in Alderdale, just outside of Prosser, Washington.

Woodward Canyon's Estate Vineyard

Woodward Canyon Winery is named for the canyon Rick grew up in and that his family farmed. The Estate Vineyard is planted where generations of the Small family grew wheat.

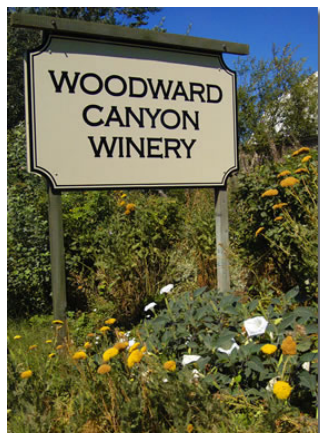


Woodward Canyon enjoys the advantage of owning mature estate vineyards, the first twenty six acres of which were planted in 1976. The Estate vineyard now includes Cabernet sauvignon, Merlot, Cabernet franc, Sauvignon blanc, Chardonnay, Dolcetto and Barbera. In 2001, 17 additional acres of estate vineyards were planted to high-density Merlot, Cabernet Sauvignon and Cabernet Franc.

Around 2000, Rick began talking about a change in the winery. Along with a greater emphasis on Estate grown wines, Rick's philosophy of winemaking has shifted.

"I'm now looking for a brightness of acidity and looking for wines for the table," he said. "I want my wines to complement food at the table---not be the showboat."

Darcey Small, Rick's wife, says it is unlikely Woodward Canyon would become a 100 percent estate winery because her husband likes to blend from different areas, different terroirs.



"Besides, it's nice to have insurance of not having all the grapes in one area, in case of a freeze, for example," she said. "It also adds more complexity to the wines."

Woodward Canyon Estate Red 02 \$55

Woodward Canyon has a mature Estate vineyard, and this Estate Red shows Rick Small's distinctive winemaking style. A wine to age, this vintage has an unusually high amount of Cabernet Franc, lending a meaty, densely concentrated quality to the wine. Pie spices, vanilla, and toasted coffee bean in the nose are complemented by big black fruit and berry flavors, seamless tannins, and tremendous potential for longer term cellaring.



Wine Spectator 90 points : "Cabernet Franc and Merlot in almost equal parts are supported by a smidge of Cabernet Sauvignon in this firm red. A distinct minty note runs through the rich berry and currant fruit, hinting at sage as it persists nicely on the chewy finish. Best from 2007 through 2012. "

Rick Small, owner and winemaker, says:

"The Woodward Canyon Estate Red is produced from the finest lots of cabernet sauvignon, merlot, and cabernet franc from our vineyard. The Woodward Canyon Estate Vineyard produced less than two tons of fruit per acre."

"The wine was fermented in small, open top tanks with native yeast and was punched down or pumped over two or three times a day. After pressing in our basket press, this wine went straight to new French chateau barrels for maturation. In early August, the wine was racked from barrel, assembled, and bottled unfiltered and unfined later that same month."

"With such low yields, the resulting wine is deeply concentrated with black fruits and cassis. The nose leaps from the glass. Spice and vanilla from new oak integrate beautifully with cabernet-dominated fruit. The texture is supple and the finish is rich and long. With proper cellaring, this wine should age for ten years from vintage. "

Three Rivers Champoux Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon 02 \$34.61/\$38.95

The Three Rivers Champoux Vineyard Cabernet Sauvignon is intensely concentrated, showing exemplary Walla Walla Cabernet varietal fruit expression. Vivid aromas of sweet black cherries, black currants, toasted coffee bean, and vanilla are followed by flavors of candied blackberries, cassis, sweet earth, tar, and black cherry fruit. A suave, splendid effort by Holly that takes this winery a big step forward. Ageable for up to ten years, but enjoyable now.



The wine is 100% Cabernet Sauvignon fruit from one of Washington State's best vineyards, Champoux Vineyard. Since the fabulous Andrew Will Champoux 02 is sold out, we wanted to point out this delicious wine made from the same vineyard's fruit. While not as good as the Andrew Will (which is also over \$50 a bottle), winemaker Holly Turner shows her talents in this big, delightfully expressive wine.

Champoux Vineyard is one of the oldest vineyards in the Columbia Valley with the first vines planted in 1972 by Don Mercer. Paul & Judy Champoux are the current majority owners of the vineyard with more than twenty years of wine grape growing experience. Many of the Northwest's premier wineries source grapes from Champoux Vineyard.

The fruit was destemmed and crushed into a small fermentor where the must was pumped over twice daily. Primary fermentation lasted seven days upon which the skins were gently pressed off and fermentation was completed in barrel. Malolactic fermentation occurred in 50% new French oak barrels adding a nice depth and complexity to the wine. While aging in oak barrels the wines were racked every four months to naturally clarify the wine.

New Discoveries Club

A Chardonnay from one of Oregon's oldest vineyards, and a Pinot noir from an up-and-coming vineyard source are the two wine selections for this month's club.

Alpine Vineyards Chardonnay 04 \$12

Alpine Chardonnay is made from Estate fruit from this vineyard in the South Willamette, nestled in the foothills of the coastal range, just south of Green Peak Mountain, in Alpine, Oregon.

The Alpine Chardonnay 04 is not only a beautiful wine, but provides a fascinating glimpse into the history of Oregon's white wines. Used to be, Oregon's white wines were quite poor, with a few exceptions. No other way to put it, 20 years ago, when I started marketing Willamette Valley Oregon wines, a lot of the whites tasted like fermented green beans (with a touch of compost heap added for frizz on). Particularly the Chardonnay, which was made from young vine 108 clone Chardonnay vines brought up from California and farmed by the gospel according to UC Davis. For years I'd sort of shrug and apologize for the state of Oregon's Chards when customers complained. A few producers in Southern Oregon made some decent Chards, but nothing to write home about.

Then along came the Dijon Clone revolution. Chardonnay vines from the Dijon region of France, where weather conditions are similar to Oregon's, were brought to Oregon (some supposedly smuggled in via suitcase from France, thus the reference to "Suitcase Clones" one hears occasionally). Now that the Dijon clone Chardonnay vines have matured, we're blessed with a plethora of really great Chardonnays made in Oregon. More Burgundian than California butterball, wines like Argyle's Chardonnay 03 make the best buy lists of Wine Spectator regularly.

But what happened to all the 108 clone Chardonnay that was planted back in the late 1970's and early 80's? Well, here's where the Alpine Chardonnay comes in- Dan and Christine's Chardonnay, planted 29 years ago, is the 108 clone. And it's just delicious. Was the climate different 20 years ago? Yes. Does comparatively young vine 108 clone Chardonnay just not make that good a wine? Maybe. Does old vine 108 clone Chardonnay, cropped at low tonnage (less than 2 tons/acre in this case) make yummy wine? Yes definitely.

The Alpine Chardonnay has a lovely balance of fruit and acidity. 2004 was a hot vintage, and the wine is not overly acidic, but there's just enough crisp apple and citrus in the finish to make it a wine to accompany foods like summer salads and grilled fish. The lush pear, apple, white peach, and hints of melon flavors also make it a "summer sipper" that will please the wine neophyte as well as the expert. Nothing is out of balance here, and the age of the vines comes through in the hints of spice and just a touch of mint and cedar in the finish. Maybe the close proximity of mint fields and Christmas tree farms contributes some of the pleasant hints of forest and fresh spring water in the scent and flavor. It's dang good wine for the price, and yes, it's 108 victorious at last (talk about patience!).

St Innocent Pinot noir Temperance Hill 03 \$22

Bright black cherry and blackberry fruit flavors are very clean and balanced. It matches perfectly with grilled meats, veggies and potato salad (my favorite summer meal).

Temperance Hill Vineyard is located in the hills formed by an ancient volcanic uplift ten miles northwest of Salem, Oregon. The Pinot noir grapes come from the eastern edge of the vineyard, that was planted in 1984 on thin weathered basalt at an average elevation of 720'.



NW Dessert Wine Club

Kiona Ice Wine Chenin Blanc 04

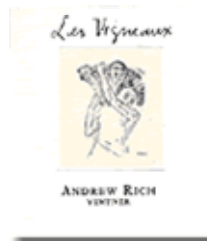
Wine Spectator 90 points: "Very sweet and rich in texture, offering honey and wildflower aromas and flavors that persist nicely on the unctuous finish. Drink now through 2007. 500 cases made."(HS)

Highly recommended- our most popular ice wine from Washington, year after year. Wonderful flavors. Wine Press NW rating "Outstanding". A fascinating dessert wine with remarkably concentrated white peach, apple, and apricot flavors. Some burnt caramel flavors meld with the big acids and fruit flavors.

Wine Press NW says: "Washington is not as well known as British Columbia for producing great ice wines, partly because Washington doesn't always have the proper conditions for it. As an example, last fall, Chateau Ste. Michelle picked just its second ice wine harvest in its 70-year history. But Kiona Vineyards Winery in Benton City manages to get a Chenin Blanc ice wine nearly every year because one area of its vineyard tends to freeze on a consistent basis. The result is a dessert wine that is much more delicate than those from British Columbia, and this example offers aromas and flavors of limes, orange peels and clover honey."



Andrew Rich Ice Wine Gewurztraminer 04 \$20



Made in the manner of German Eiswein—except that the grapes are frozen after harvest. The rock-hard little gewurz marbles are pressed for a full day or more as the thick, sweet juice drips slowly into the pan.

Yields are about half that of fresh grapes, but with nearly twice the normal sugar

level. The juice will then ferment for more than two months—until the acid/sugar/alcohol balance is judged to be ideal—before bottling.

Wine Spectator rating 92 points for 2002 vintage, this wine routinely rated 90 or more points from Wine Spectator

An Avalon Best Seller. Delicious flavors of white peach, melon, honey, apricot, with good acidity that balances the sweetness.



Reserve Pinot noir Club continued....

The 2003 Pinot noirs from Cherry Hill are the first releases from the winery, and were made by winemaker Chris Luby. Chris was formerly assistant winemaker at Firesteed and Flynn.

The wines are quite excellent for such young vines, and the winemaker, vineyard management, and owners are to be commended for their excellent first vintage. As those who follow Oregon Pinot noir are aware, 2003 was a hot, dry vintage, and careful and skilled winemaking produced very fine wines, but the vintage was not an easy one. While the entry level "Papillon" is now showing the results of the hot vintage (it's a bit too soft and could use more acidity), the other wines show first class balance and big flavors.

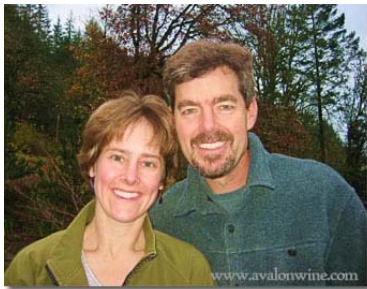
Dundee Hills Vineyard

Planted more than 25 years ago, the Dundee Hills Vineyard (from whose fruit the Dusky Goose Pinot noir is made) produces fruit from mature vines on thin, volcanic soils. Planted initially in Pommard and Wadenswil Clone vines, additional plantings of Dijon clones like 777 have added to the available fruit for the wine. The property, 17 acres nestled in the Dundee Hills in the Willamette Valley, once belonged to John and Sally Bauers, who planted a vineyard on the site in 1974.

Owners John and Linda Carter have worked with winemaker Lynn Penner Ash since the vineyard first started producing fruit. Lynn made some of Rex Hill's highest rated Pinot noirs from Dundee Hills Vineyard fruit before she left to start her own winery. She is now winemaker for Dusky Goose as well as for her family's Penner Ash Cellars.

We are working with 28-year-old Pommard and Wadensville vines," says Penner-Ash. "We now also have new Dijon clones 667, 777, and 115 so I have a creative palate to blend the best possible wine. Winemaking is about relationships, and the Carters are great to work with – they want to make an incredible wine."

Using sustainable farming practices, Penner-Ash and vineyard manager, **Andy Humphrey**, plan to keep the yield between 1 ¼ - 2 ¼ tons per acre. Humphrey's viticulture includes unique shoot positioning, selective leaf pulling to open the canopy and early crop thinning. A new vineyard, planted by the Carters in 2004, Rambouillet Vineyard, will add additional clonal diversity in future vintages.



Lynn and Ron Penner Ash

Dusky Goose Pinot noir 03 \$48

Lynn Penner-Ash (Penner-Ash Winery) has worked with the fruit of the Goldschmidt/Dundee Hills Vineyard for almost 20 years, and makes the vineyard owner's signature wine, Dusky Goose. Last year it was our customers' second favorite Pinot noir (as measured in purchases), exceeded only by the 95 point (WS) Beaux Freres Estate. The wine has gained a loyal following.

Customers who like Dusky Goose Pinot noir like perfectly balanced Pinots, those that combine concentration of fruit with layers and layers of complex, constantly changing, nuanced fruit, spice and herb flavors, combining all that is most interesting and delicious in Pinot noir into a perfectly balanced whole.



The **2003 Dusky Goose Pinot noir \$48** is even more impressive than the popular 2002. It is a big wine, dark, opaquely ruby in color, with a rich, silky texture in the mouth. The Goldschmidt/Dundee Hills Vineyard fruit produces a unique scent, an amalgam of red raspberry, dried cherries, plums, and vanilla spice. Plush flavors of dried cherry, black cherry, candied cherry, chocolate covered cherry, blackberry and sweet ripe fruit dance on the palate with hints of cinnamon, clove, allspice, and white pepper.

Elusive and intriguing notes of violet, rose petal, and culinary herbs add further complexity, and a seamless, shot silk texture impresses the taster. The balance is perfect - expressive tannins balance the rich fruit and the wine, concentrated as it is, maintains good acidity for aging, with a long finish of ever changing spice, cherry, berry, and cedar. This wine will age for ten years with continued impressive drinking for the consumer.

Cherry Hill Winery Pinot noir Estate \$28

"Cherry Hill Winery produced its first vintage from its new winery in 2003. The winery's first Cherry Hill Winery Estate Pinot noir 03 is made from Pommard clone grapes, which make up 55% of the Cherry Hill 55 acre vineyard. The fruit for this wine was hand picked from the best blocks of this young vineyard, and yields were restricted to two tons per acre. The grapes were fermented in small lots, and was aged in neutral French oak for one year.

This Estate wine is not a big bruiser, but shows a delicacy of fruit and complexity of flavor that belies the youth of the vineyard. The wine has a light scent of cherry with a hint of oak. The flavors are spicy blackberry, raspberry, and a bit of Bing cherry. There's a distinct Burgundian sweetness to the wine, maybe partially from the choice of oak for aging? The finish is moderately long and classic, with well integrated, fine grained tannins artfully balancing lingering sweet fruit notes.

Wine Spectator rating 91 points: "Relatively firm, with lively, emphatic raspberry and plum flavors that sail through the finish, lingering seamlessly. Best from 2007 through 2013." H.S.

